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This paper examines the role of individuals in positions of responsibility (POR) during the implementation of two different curriculum innovations: curriculum integration and performance-based assessment. In addition to addressing the lack of knowledge of department heads' role in implementing innovations, the report explores the effectiveness of individual departments and the impact of department heads on the teaching/learning process. The data were derived from four research studies. Three studies involved individuals in traditional department-head roles, whereas the fourth study included individuals in nonsubject POR. Results revealed various roles for managers. Study one suggested a role that was more managerial than change facilitator. Studies two and three indicated that even with the valiant efforts of individuals and of groups of department heads, it was almost impossible to facilitate substantial change. Change was unlikely as long as individuals protected the status quo. Results from study four, on the other hand, showed that a nonsubject, organizational structure can successfully facilitate and sustain whole-school change. Overall, when questions began to push the boundaries of the current department head's roles, teaching patterns, and student learning, teachers returned to past practices. Schools remained firmly entrenched in structures that fostered limited questioning. Contains 29 references. (RJM)

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To The Barricades: The Department Head Role In Change

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To the Barricades: The Department Head Role in Change[1]

Increasingly, society is demanding deeper reforms and a faster pace of change from public educational systems. These demands are more problematic for secondary than for elementary schools because of their size as well as the complicated structure perpetuated by the traditional subject department structure. This structure can support innovations that complement traditional practice but might be a barrier to implementing innovations that challenge traditional practice. Facilitating change requires change advocacy (Fullan, 1993) and the designated department head position in secondary schools could be an asset for curriculum implementation. However, little research exists on the role of department heads in implementing innovations, the effectiveness of individual departments, or the impact of department heads on the teaching/learning process (Bolam & Turner, 1998; Harris, Jamieson & Russ, 1995; Hill, 1995; Siskin, 1994; Siskin & Little, 1995).

In this paper, we examine the role of individuals in Positions of Responsibility (POR)[2] in the implementation of two different curriculum innovations: curriculum integration and performance-based assessment. The data are derived from four research studies. Three studies involved individuals in traditional department head roles while the fourth study involved individuals in non-subject Positions of Responsibility. Our intent in re-analysing the data was to examine the influence of the POR structure in implementing innovations that were cross-departmental or involved a whole school focus.

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[2]The legal term used in Ontario legislation for positions such as department heads.

Conceptual Framework

Most secondary schools are organized around subjects with department heads, individually and collectively, in formal leadership and managerial roles. Individually, the subject department head is to be a supervisor, implementer, guarantor of subject integrity and standards. Collectively, department heads form the cabinet in most secondary schools. The term cabinet itself--in parliamentary terms--suggests a decision-making body with the responsibility of enacting policy. The typical implementation procedures followed in most secondary schools sustains a parliamentary analogy. Upon receiving a policy directive, a principal typically assumes that the department heads will provide the active leadership and facilitation required for implementation.

The traditional implementation process in secondary schools with the department heads as implementors might be adequate if the innovation is a refinement or adaptation of existing practice. However if the reform initiative involves deep challenges to traditional practices, it might be problematic for subject department heads to effectively facilitate the implementation process. For innovations involving curriculum integration, the subject structure itself might curtail cross-departmental actions and collaboration required for implementation. The core issue might be whether the function of a secondary school middle-management structure is perceived as protecting and enhancing existing practice or facilitating a reconceptualization of secondary school education (Hannay & Ross, in press).

The research community is only beginning to examine empirically the roles played by departments and department heads in secondary schools. The department head structure has been the taken-for-granted means of organizing secondary schools (Bolam & Turner, 1998; Hannay & Ross, in press; Hill, 1995; Siskin, 1994) and yet little is known about how this structure influences the

teaching/learning or the change processes. The underlying concept of this structure is to protect the integrity of the subject with the department head assuming varying degrees of responsibility for supervision and managerial duties.

Further, researchers are just beginning to examine how the subject structure shapes secondary school cultures (Hannay & Ross, in press) and practice. By basing the structure on subject, the structure emphasizes discrete subject knowledge rather than cross-disciplinary knowledge (Grossman & Stodolsky, 1995; Hargreaves, 1994; Talbert & McLaughlin, 1992) and creates sub-cultures in most secondary schools (Stoll & Fink, 1996). These sub-cultures can curtail dialogue and collaboration among teachers from different subject areas (Dimmock, 1995; Grossman & Stodolsky, 1995; Hargreaves, 1994; Little, 1992; Johnson, 1990). Not surprisingly, the subject-based structure compartmentalizes secondary schools creating the balkanization described by Hargreaves (1994). According to Dellar (1996) this can diminish whole school culture, inter-departmental reform initiatives, and pedagogical change. Protecting, not challenging, the status quo can become the major goal of the individuals (department heads) appointed to departmental leadership positions.

Yet recent reform initiatives for secondary schools are often incongruent with the departmental structure as increasingly society is advocating creative and multi-disciplinary approaches to problem framing and problem solving. A post-modern era which embodies the dissolution of boundaries runs contrary to the departmentalization of learning and the stability of the department structure (Hargreaves & Macmillan, 1995). Perhaps, the most difficult and complex changes to achieve within secondary schools involves the implementation of innovations that require whole school change. Often the degree of change required challenges the deeply held beliefs and assumptions of secondary structure and culture (Hannay, 1996). Challenging the taken-for-granted

practices can question status quo assumptions of operational structures, subject status, and teacher identity. Generally, this questioning creates great discomfort and is not welcomed in a secondary culture that embraces departmentalized structures. Often the traditional way of doing business prevails and the school reverts to the compartmentalized operating structures thus inhibiting cultural change (Hannay & Schmalz, 1995).

It is questionable whether the subject-central, balkanized, departmental structure can bring about whole school change. Hargreaves & Macmillan (1995) suggests that de-balkanization of departments might be necessary in order to facilitate whole school change. Unless the power and status embedded in subject expertise is successfully challenged, the established pattern of subject dominance is likely to reassert itself thus reinforcing departmentalism and curtailing alternative patterns of organization. In contrast, when subject divisions become less firmly rooted, other organizational categories can emerge (Hargreaves & Macmillan, 1995) and the changes to structure could facilitate changes to culture (Stoll & Fink, 1996).

Possibly new leadership roles and ways of interacting are necessary in secondary schools. Hargreaves (1994) advocates replacing the departmental structure with a moving mosaic that encourages flexible interaction patterns. If the goal is secondary school change then the conception of middle-management might have to change from one focussing on enhancing existing practice to one designed to facilitate change. Further, new structures must be supportive of cross-departmental interaction patterns and facilitate collaboration between teachers about ideas related directly to teaching and learning.

In this paper, we explore the roles of the traditional department head structure and a non-subject structure in dealing with whole school change initiatives. We argue that the department head

model represents a protectionistic model that serves to perpetuate the status quo while the alternative POR structure represents a responsive model that is more change oriented.

Background to the Program of Research

Over the last ten years we have undertaken a research program on the role of Positions of Responsibility (POR) in Ontario secondary schools. During this time period, Ontario secondary schools have been subjugated to curriculum initiatives that challenged the traditional subject organizational structure as a means of implementing legislated policy. The first major curriculum initiative involved destreaming (untracking) and curriculum integration at the Grade 9 level. After four years, this initiative was abandoned due to the election of a government with a decidedly different ideological framework. Concern with accountability and assessment has been the second more recent initiative. Both of these policy initiatives challenge the traditional organizational structures of instructional strategies typically employed in secondary schools. In this paper, we use data from one descriptive and three longitudinal studies[3] to re-analyse the role played by Positions of Responsibility in implementing the innovations legislated by the provincial government. In order to facilitate credibility, we have coded each piece of data. Each quote is identified by the study; first by a number and then by the individual code used in the original research reports.

The first three studies (reported as Study One, (Hannay, 1992); Study Two, (Hannay, 1994); Study Three, (Hannay & Schmalz, 1995)) began with the premise that the department head structure could act as the catalyst for change. Study One was a descriptive account of the role performed by department heads as reported by a large sample of department heads in one school district. At the point the data was collected, the provincial government introduced draft curriculum policy advocating

[3] Reference to the research reports provides a detailed analysis of each study.

curriculum integration. By the start of both Study Two and Three, the curriculum policy advocating destreaming and curriculum implementation had been initiated and we worked over a two year period in 9 secondary schools to assist department heads in gaining change agent skills in order to implement the mandated policy.

Our fourth study (Study Four, (Hannay & Ross, 1996, 1997, 1999a)) in this research program was decidedly different as we were invited to work with eight secondary schools of one Ontario school district that were empowered to change their organizational structures. While the schools designed their own POR models, they had no option in disengaging from this process and the status quo of the department head structure was deemed as unacceptable. The schools have gradually moved away from a subject-based organizational structure to one that allocates POR resources to functions deemed supportive of whole school activity (i.e., assessment, professional development, change). During the four years to date in this study, a new provincial government decreased the emphasis on curriculum integration and abandoned destreaming and began to focus on accountability and assessment.

In this paper, we retroactively consider the role of POR structure in implementing such innovations as curriculum integration and performance-based assessment. Both of these innovations represent complex change for secondary schools as they challenge taken-for-granted assumptions and practices by requiring whole school collaboration. We first examine the department head role in implementing curriculum integration (Study Two and Three) and then consider the role of assessment facilitators in implementing performance-based assessment (Study Four).

Findings

When we began this research program, it was evident to both individuals in the school system and to the researchers that Ontario secondary schools were facing significant reform initiatives that would challenge traditional forms of secondary school education. We believed that department heads were in a natural position through which to facilitate the reforms. Consequently, we accepted the invitation to work with department heads in assisting them in being change agents to facilitate legislated reform policy. Our first research effort, in partnership with a school district committee, was to learn from department heads on how they conceived their role.

The data from Study One on the role of department heads indicated that their role was more managerial than focussed on facilitating change. For example, only 3% of the department heads interviewed believed that facilitating staff development was part of their responsibility even when the curriculum integration and destreaming government policy required new teaching strategies if the innovation was to be successful. The subject department meeting seemed like a natural venue through which to facilitate curriculum and instructional change, yet 45% of department heads said that curriculum issues were not a focus at departmental meetings even with the initiation of curriculum policy that deviated from past practice. Another natural venue through which to facilitate whole school change was the department head cabinet meetings yet the top three topics identified as typical for these meetings were housekeeping (23%), procedures (18%) and budget (14%).Thirty-five percent of the responses indicated there was no discussion of curriculum/instructional issues at department head meetings.

Yet the evidence suggested that the interviewed department heads wanted to perform more of a change-facilitator role and identified they wanted professional development on curriculum

implementation and the process of change. Consequently, our next efforts were directed at helping department heads gain change agentry skills in order to implement the provincial legislated policy of curriculum integration and destreaming.

Implementing Curriculum Integration: The Role of Subject Department Heads

We began Study Two and Three in different sites with the intent to provide the change facilitation skills identified by department heads in Study One and to employ department head cabinet as a means through which to facilitate whole school change. We thought that the department head structure was a natural one to implement the curriculum policy because of the time allocated to department heads for departmental tasks, the implementation responsibility typically assigned department heads in their job descriptions, and the possibility of the department head council as a means to facilitate school-based change. Yet even with valiant efforts of individuals and of groups of department heads in individuals schools, it seemed almost impossible for department heads to facilitate substantial change, such as curriculum integration, which challenged basic operational structures of secondary schools.

In varying degrees in the volunteering schools, the department cabinets attempted to consider whole school change in light of the implementation of the curriculum integration innovation. Professional development sessions were provided to assist the department heads in learning about facilitating professional growth, change planning, and the change process itself. The school staffs that more seriously attempted to implement the cross-departmental innovation had to create a super-ordinary structure to augment the department head role:

> We worked in teams according to the organization of [cross curricular integration]. And then we brought our expertise to our own department in to organize units. . . .

> We worked together and I'd bring those results into the writing team. Then the heads would organize how our curriculum would be delivered. [3:A6]

Discomfort was created as department heads and teachers were expected to deliver a Grade 9 curriculum with an integrated focus and to collaborate across subject divisions in developing a non-subject specific curriculum. Suddenly, the taken-for-granted roles and relationships were challenged and secondary teachers faced a mode of operation beyond the givens of an entrenched, subject central culture:

> The set roles are not set right now. Before, everybody knew [the roles]. They felt they were experts in their area. That was where they felt the comfort. Now they're leading into other areas and they don't feel as comfortable going in those areas. [3:A83]

The taken-for-granted practices and assumptions of department heads were also challenged as curriculum demands changed, yet departmental divisions remained intact. Heads were unsure of their current role as leaders of specific subject areas. One department head suggested: "So we don't know, exactly where do we fit in now?" [3:A5] which was reinforced by another chairperson: "There is a real vacuum . . . there is no defined role for area chairpersons" [2:OS2]. Other individuals expressed discomfort with whether an integrated curricular approach would alter the department head role, the status of subjects, and relationships with members of other departments:

> Most of us are concerned either with how it impacts on our own department and at times we're concerned with the crossover into other departments. . . . Department heads are actually having to step outside their subject specialty . . . the curriculum expertise that's required. [3:A8]

Participants reported feeling uncomfortable with the enormity of change to operational structures faced by secondary schools in this Ministry initiative. The status quo was a comfortable, secure position. Department heads remained sceptical of the need for change in a system that they perceived to function effectively and most participants reported little need to question past structures:

> First of all, we don't see the need to change the current structure. We think it works as is; it works well. If it needs to be changed, expand it. Don't throw out the baby with the bath water is what we're saying. If it's not broken, don't fix it. If it's working well, leave it alone. [3:A5]

In most schools, initially, there were cultural adaptations emerging; especially the concept of collaborating with colleagues about issues related to teaching and learning. In order to facilitate cross-curricular teaching, for instance, department heads quickly learned that working alone was no longer effective to meet the requirements of integrated learning. Moreover, teachers experienced firsthand the benefits of collaborative efforts as they explored teaching strategies, discussed student needs and questioned the value to student learning:

> We sit down and talk about individual [students]. We can talk about common strategies for students who aren't the quickest learners. We sit down and talk about using strategies for people who have discipline problems. In my judgement, the maximum benefit of [the cohort structure] for destreaming is you can sit down and you can compare students in their various classes, and say this works here, this doesn't work. [2:C32]

As teachers worked collaboratively on implementing cross-curricular approaches, they began to challenge their previous images of the adolescent learner and the impact of the secondary school structure on the learning process. They explored the needs of the individual student learner, how to best address those needs, and the impact of revised teaching practices on the learner. For instance, some teachers began questioning the status quo in order to re-align their philosophy of teaching with classroom practice:

> Content lessons are a thing of the past. Socratic teaching, lesson overhead format is gone. It's an interactive classroom now. There's group activity. There's hands on learning. There's tie-in of previous theoretical points and then practical applications. . . . You can see some teachers struggling with changing their old methods. They still want to put that note on the board. [2:A11]

Further, in some of the participating schools, decisions around teaching strategies incorporated a student-driven curriculum rather than a content-driven approach:

> I think that the future is more the idea of life-long learning. I think that we have to think about the individual as a learner and not lock into a strict curriculum base. . . . I think that as soon as people realize, as schools and as department heads, that we're preparing kids for life, we're not preparing them for university then we can actually get down to the business of educating. . . . It's not how much was shoved down your throat in high school. [3:A2]

Once teachers observed a positive impact of integrated curriculum on the learning process, teachers began to transfer their learning beyond the Grade 9 Ministry initiative and into other classrooms. Teachers became interested in how the initiatives of the cross-curricular innovation could enhance the learning outcomes for a larger number of students:

> . . . because of [integration], just because I teach Grade 11, I can't teach Grade 11 the way I always have. . . . I can't be Socrates. I can't do a 76 minute lecture anymore, 'cause [students] can't handle it. You need some activity. I find that I have to give them much more specific and clear instructions that have to be repeated several times . . . even if [integration] hadn't come along, I think we all would have had to change the way we teach. Because the kids are changing. And we're here to meet their needs. [3:A5]

In both studies, most of the participating schools were opposed to the provincial curriculum integration policy from the beginning of the project and only made superficial changes to their practice with the least amount of disruption possible. However, in both Studies Two and Three, several schools were more supportive of the concept and attempted to implement the policy in a serious manner. Yet these schools also failed to sustain curriculum integration and ultimately, all of the schools involved in the two studies gradually reverted to the traditional operating structures of secondary schools.

Even with good will and sincere efforts of the staffs in several schools, the innovation failed partially due to the lack of structural change. These schools attempted to implement a cross-

departmental initiative through the change facilitation of existing department heads. Repeatedly the data reported evidence of no role changes within the department head structure during the integration innovation:

> I don't really think that the role changed at all. I just think that we looked at it from a different perspective. You still had to look for curriculum and you still had to monitor. So you did the same types of jobs. I don't think my role has changed. I'm still doing the same types of work, probably even a little bit more. [3:A7]

Several of these schools had initiated a complex set of informal cross-departmental committees through which to facilitate the change. But the committee roles were voluntary and without formal recognition, the committee structures degraded and curriculum integration gradually disappeared. Without a change in the structural leadership roles within the school, the status quo easily returned as noted by a participant: "When there's no structure, infrastructure there for people to follow a certain job sometimes it's easy just to fall back and let the status quo go" [2:OS2].

In retrospectively reviewing Study Two and Three, the data suggested that changes in structure were unlikely as long as individuals protected the status quo and schools found themselves in situations where their structures were incongruent with the cross-departmental innovation. While teachers generally expressed their support of the collaboration that had developed, the culture was not adapted enough to challenge the traditional compartmentalized structure. With a structure heavily embedded in protectionism and status quo mentality, the integration innovation failed. Ultimately the integration innovation failed due to structures that could not be questioned and which could not provide the culture necessary for cross-departmental collaboration. Simply, the form of the innovation was incompatible with the function of the organizational structure.

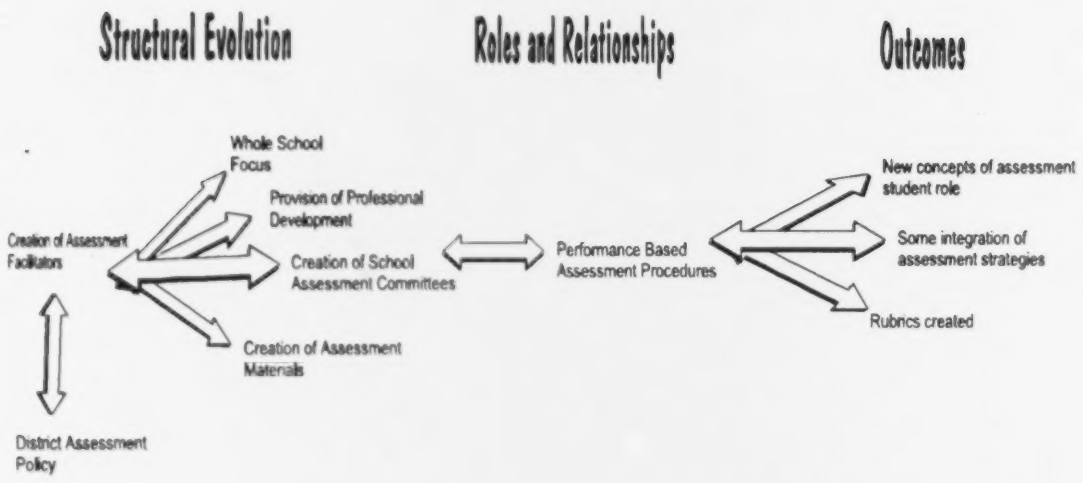
Implementing Performance-Based Assessment: The Role of Facilitators

In Study Four, we worked with a school system that was directly and deliberately addressing structural change as each secondary school was required to create site-based POR models that replaced the department head structure. Symbolically, the school district in partnership with the secondary school union affiliate, replaced the term department head with that of facilitator in the collective agreement. Additionally, each school staff was to be involved in the model creation process. Through three years of data collection in these schools, we can identify the evolution of the structural changes. Most schools originally opted to maintain as much of the department structure as possible; however, three years later most schools have developed models based on the function needs of the school. Increasingly, the models were responsive to societal and school needs and the positions created became directly charged with change facilitation. At this point in time, the most common POR position is that of student assessment with five out of eight schools including this position in their site-based models.

Performance-based assessment is perhaps one of the two most difficult reform initiatives faced by secondary schools as this initiative, similar to curriculum integration, challenges the traditional practices and beliefs of secondary school teachers. However, unlike the previous case study of curriculum integration initiative which was "dumped" into a traditional organizational structure; the case study of implementing performance-based assessment involves first creating a supportive structure which operated in an increasingly collaborative culture. In this section, we explore the role of the new facilitators in supporting the implementation of performance-based assessment. The work of these facilitators illuminates the relationship between structural, procedural, cultural and learning

opportunities. Figure 1 attempts to display the relationship.

Figure 1: Impact of Restructuring on Assessment Practices



The change process began with structural change and staff decisions to create the assessment facilitator positions with responsibility for student assessment practices across the whole school. Several of the assessment facilitators joined the school district committee responsible for designing policy concerning assessment practices for secondary school students. This committee recommended that authentic assessment days be embedded into the school year, as opposed to the traditional end of semester exam block. Consequently, the structure of the school year was modified to include authentic assessment days which were scheduled across the year:

> We have scheduled two authentic assessment days each semester. They have gone extremely well. The Grade 9 report card is another example of how we're changing assessment strategies. [4:12]

By contributing to the policy change, the facilitators assisted in changing the assessment procedures and structures expected as the norm for secondary schools across the school district. This shift in the use of time provided an example of the retiming that Fullan (1997) claims is an important component to the restructuring and reculturing process.

At the school level, the assessment facilitators assumed an active, not passive, change agent role. They were involved in the reconceptualization of staff meetings from information sharing to professional development and dialogue which provided an opportunity to facilitate the learning necessary for rethinking assessment practices. Through the process, the focus of assessment changed from end of unit tests and exams to a more performance-based assessment. Assessment facilitators created school-based assessment committees with up to 25% of the school staff participating voluntarily. These committees provided a procedural means to deal with alternative assessment as well as a cultural change with teachers from diverse subjects working on an issue pertaining to teaching and learning across the whole school. Further these committees provided a forum for increased teacher leadership. The key role played by an assessment facilitator and a school-based evaluation committee was described by a principal:

> The opportunity to take a different kind of position, not a traditional position in the school, and to have that person work with the committee and start the process of looking at where were we going with assessment and evaluation. Then be given this opportunity to do something different in terms of the half-day evaluations, passing that torch to the committee and saying OK run with it. [4:P7]

Through the staff meetings, professional development, and assessment committee, the assessment facilitator was assuming an active role in helping teachers think differently about assessment:

> New mind set is what do you want that student to be able to achieve? Which is the best way for that student to do that? In which format? A lot more flexibility. And

> conferencing constantly to see, how are you doing? Why are you doing? Have you made progress? If not, why not? [4:P8]

Additionally, the assessment facilitators were also directly involved in supporting professional development activities for teachers in their school, for example: "We did a workshop on authentic assessment. We looked at some rubrics and we've started a very rough introduction to the rubric idea" [4:B4].

The assessment facilitator in conjunction with other staff members, developed rubrics as a means of guiding and assessing student learning which was a significant change to assessment practices in most secondary schools. As noted by a principal: "I think that has had a significant change to the way that they do teach by using things such as peer evaluation in the classroom, by using rubrics" [4:P6]. Additionally, there was evidence that teachers from different subjects were collaborating on using the same performance instrument to assess student learning thus focussing on teaching for understanding by integrating concepts from different subject areas. Cross departmental collaboration was noted in both the development of the school assessment policy as well as the development of assessment instruments:

> For example, the math/science department, decided that they will have one single assessment item that would be done in every grade. So they created a problem and the kids had to solve the problem and it was done at all grade levels. [4:P7]

There was a definite shift in assessment practices in schools with the introduction of assessment facilitators. Certainly, this change was associated with the change in district policy but implementation was enhanced by the existence of a change agent dedicated to a change in assessment practices and one that could provide relevant professional development. The active engagement was

critical. As a change agent, for example, a facilitator enacted a culture of inquiry to collect data on assessment practices and then used that data as a basis of future action:

> Interestingly enough, when we got back the student questionnaires, one of the columns that the students had to look at was whether or not they could see a connection between what was going on in the assessment and the real world. And a number of them couldn't see relevance. They couldn't see that there was any connection. So, I think what we need to do now is go back to the staff and say, We're not making it clear to students that there is a connection. Students still see school as a separate entity unto itself, not something that's an integral part of the rest of their existence. So, that's something that needs to be addressed. [4:C16]

Through facilitating professional development and developing school-based assessment instruments and rubrics, another facilitator clearly supported the development of new teaching/learning outcomes:

> Having people using our assessment instruments as I intended them to be formative evaluation tools--things to help kids figure out what they're not doing right, what can they focus on. We've now got ideas of target behaviours, a target for individuals, targets for classes. The push towards looking at many different strategies for evaluating a student. [4:I4]

The involvement in reconceptualizing assessment to be performance-based impacted on teacher actions especially in terms of teaching strategies:

> I think the teachers perhaps are more conscious of how they teach in the classroom and more conscious of how they evaluate what they do teach in the classroom. I think performance based assessment has changed some of their style of teaching in the classroom. They're putting more emphasis on allowing students more opportunities to practice and demonstrate the skills that they've taught. I think it has made them very conscious of the different styles of assessment and evaluation and that has reflected in the practice because I think some of them, not all of them obviously, think of how they're going to evaluate something before they teach it. [4:P6]

Students were being assessed on not only their content knowledge but also the application of that knowledge. Again, the conceptions of assessment were expanding to include a focus on teaching and learning for understanding:

> Well the idea of kids understanding how we learn, how we learn differently, so it's not that I don't want the kid not to understand the math, but are there other ways of getting around? I've seen kids in general level classes go through all the theory of pulleys and fulcrums and leavers in an automotive shop and never mentioned the term pulleys, fulcrums or leavers. So one of the things that I hope that came out of the authentic evaluation and I hope we continue with it is force teachers to look at ways that allow kids to show what they know as opposed to telling. [4:P7]

Changing conceptions about assessment expanded the decision-making space to include students as an integral component in the assessment process:

> So I think authentic assessment involves a very different type of interaction with teacher and student on assessing their learnings. I think that's going to have an impact and a carryover, much more moving away from the teacher being the only person who's assessing and the assessing always being done apart from what the student is doing. Students becoming much more involved in the planning of instruction as well is definitely another goal. Getting more students and peers involved in assessment is important. I see assessment can really have a positive impact on the interrelationships with staff, between staff and students and on teaching and learning. [4:P2]

The experiences of the participants in Study Four continue to unfold and they face new political challenges but three years into the continuing research study, it appears that the assessment facilitators have expedited significant changes to assessment practices across their schools. In Study Four, changes to the organizational structure of the participating schools lead to the focus on student assessment. By reconceptualizing their POR structures that identified and addressed whole school needs and goals rather than maintaining a compartmentalized subject structure, the facilitators were able to directly impact the teaching/learning opportunities offered to students. In the previous section we focussed on the role of assessment facilitators but the other positions created (i.e. change, staff development, student-at-risk facilitators) had similar influence.

Although the schools had different experiences and are at different points in the change process, we have documented an increased change capacity (Hannay & Ross, 1999a) which is being

employed to implement whole school change. Further, in other publications (Hannay & Ross, in press; 1999b), we have documented the reculturing that has occurred in all participating schools. Certainly the evidence from Study Four suggests that a non-subject organizational structure has successfully facilitated and is sustaining whole school change.

Discussion

Initially, a similar goal characterized these case studies which was to provide programmatic change that impacted on students. In the integration innovation, questioning was permissible when contained to the status quo structures. However, when questions began to push the boundaries of the current department head roles, teaching patterns and student learning, teachers promptly returned to the beliefs and practices of past practice. The schools remained firmly entrenched in a structure that fostered limited questioning. An orientation to change that characterized the beginning stages of the project was aborted due to the barriers of a culture and structures heavily embedded in status quo orientation.

In the assessment innovation, the school district demonstrated a change orientation when it determined that previous leadership structures were 'unacceptable' and mandated that each school design and implement a new POR structure. A change orientation developed in the POR restructuring process and the schools operated within a structure that questioned traditional paradigms. The new POR structure earned legitimacy through the hard work of implementation and contained the power to manage further change (Fullan & Miles, 1992). The success of the structure and the urge for teachers to "go deeper" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998), led participants to further examine how they might meet the ever-changing needs of students. Thus when the new structures gave birth to a subsequent innovation (performance-based assessment), a structure and culture was in place to

sustain the innovation. The structure provided the foundation to support new ways of working for administrators and teachers. Over time, teachers changed their beliefs and practices (Fullan, 1993) in order to sustain the change initiative. Reculturing occurred as a result of restructuring (Hannay & Ross, 1999b).

Both innovations held the potential to permeate subject-based boundaries. The integration innovation was implemented within the context of the firmly-entrenched department head structure. The emphasis on subject centrality ensured protection of the status quo structure as a foundational cultural attribute. The department head structure was organized around subject divisions that defined and gave permission for how leadership was provided within the school. In contrast, the assessment innovation was born within the context of a newly formed leadership structure that supported whole school change and teacher leadership as part of the school culture. The leadership structure emphasized whole school functions, as opposed to subjects, as the primary means of operating the school.

The degree to which a school preserves the status of the subject and department head role is likely to impact the success of change initiatives especially if those innovations deviate from past practice. Hargreaves & Macmillan (1995) suggest there is a need for a moving mosaic as "an organization antidote to balkanization". Further they argue that a fluid, dynamic organizational structure will only survive in secondary schools if the career position of department head is sacrificed. The success of the assessment innovation might be attributed to the concept of the POR as a moving mosaic. The structure, designed by individuals within the school, encouraged participants to challenge the basic operational structures of the secondary schools. Department heads sacrificed their subject-specific authority positions and subject status. Teachers were allowed to change their beliefs and

practices (Fullan, 1993) and could then attend to what they believe and value in the school culture (Fullan, 1991). In the integration innovation, department heads struggled to implement the outcomes of integrated curriculum and most were confronted with delineating new roles without a structure in place to support those new roles. The assessment innovation thrived because new structures supported a culture of change, while the integration innovation died because old structures did not support alternatives to past practice.

Whole school implementation of innovations that require new conceptions of secondary school education and new roles for teachers were more successful when supported by the non-subject specific POR roles. The non-subject POR structure had deeply incorporated the concept of change facilitation into the site-specific models which implicitly encouraged challenges to past paradigms. Focussing on student learning as opposed to teaching was a critical dimension of the process. Additionally, individuals in the new roles were active change agents and they involved other teachers from all subjects in the process. By allocating the POR resources to functions that crossed subject boundaries, these schools were establishing new interaction patterns that spanned subjects. Further by respecting the teachers abilities' to create, revise, and sustain site-based organizational models, the process implicitly encouraged teacher professionalism and ownership of the change initiatives. We began this paper by stating that whole school change which challenges past practice is problematic for secondary schools because of the size and the compartmentalized organizational structure. Yet these factors can be overcome, as demonstrated in Study Four, when school staffs are given the opportunity to create alternatives. Whole school change can be facilitated but perhaps not within traditional organizational structures.

In conclusion, the department structure and the department head positions are deeply entrenched in secondary school teachers' sense of identity. Yet the structure can prohibit whole school change by limiting the options considered viable. As noted by a participant from Study Four earlier in the research process:

> I think at some point that the structure has to be attacked. I mean, the French tore down the Bastille because it was symbolic. Once the Bastille was torn down, at least symbolically some of the power of the Crown was torn down with it. [4:A7]

Challenging that structure can lead to individuals 'manning' the barricades and resisting change. However, if alternatives structures are created by teachers, this barricade can be symbolically stormed resulting in new possibilities for whole school change in secondary schools.

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